

Message Text

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14

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-11 SAM-01 AID-05 /082 W

----- 069784

R 100950Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2961

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, RH, US

SUBJECT: ZAMBIAN PRESS COMMENT ON US POLICY TOWARD RHODESIA

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. PARTY-OWNED TIMES OF ZAMBIA MARCH 10 CARRIES EDITORIAL CRITICAL OF USG POSITION ON RHODESIAN PROBLEM. FAVORABLY NOTING COMMENTS BY SENATOR HUMPHREY ON RECENT BBC "PANORAMA" PROGRAM CALLING ON RHODESIAN WHITES TO HAND OVER POWER TO MAJORITY AND URGING WESTERN POWERS NOT TO FIGHT FOR RHODESIA, TIMES SAYS HUMPHREY HAS UTTERED WORDS "WHICH PRESIDENT FORD FINDS IMPOSSIBLE EVEN TO HUM TO HIMSELF." EDITORIAL CALLS USG POSITION ON RHODESIA "MEALIE-MOUTHED" AND "HARDLY APPRECIATIVE" OF MOZAMBICAN ACTION IN IMPOSING SANCTIONS. GOES ON TO CHARACTERIZE US OFFICIAL REACTION TO RHODESIAN DEVELOPMENTS

AS ONE THAT, WHEN SITUATION BOILS OVER IN NEAR FUTURE, MAY FIND US FIGHTING ON OPPOSITE SIDE FROM AFRICAN PROGRESSIVE FORCES. THIS IS BECAUSE, TIMES ASSERTS, FORD ADMINISTRATION ARE FALLING

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INTO TRAP OF ASSOCIATING PROGRESSIVE CHANGE WITH POLITICAL FORCES

OPPOSED TO US. THUS, US MUST INEVITABLY EMERGE ON WRONG SIDE FROM WHICH IT WOULD THEN BE BARRED FROM PLAYING CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE. EDITORIAL GOES ON TO ARGUE THAT HOPE FOR SETTLEMENT NOW WITHOUT WAR IS "PIPE DREAM TURNED NONSENSICAL." CONCLUDES BY URGING USG TO AT LEAST "STOP MALIGNING THOSE PREPARED TO DIE WITH THE AFRICANS, BE THEY RUSSIANS, CUBANS, OR INDEED PEOPLE OF ANY NATIONALITY...IT WILL NOT HELP AFRICANS IF US LOOKS AT MASSIVE MILITARY ADVANCE INTO RHODESIA (AS OBLIGING HER TO) FIGHT THE SOVIET UNION FOR ACCOMPANYING THE AFRICANS." END UNCLAS-SIFIED

2. COMMENT: VIEWS ABOUT US POLICY TOWARD RHODESIA EXPRESSED IN THIS EDITORIAL ARE SYMPTOMATIC OF CONCERNs BEING EXPRESSED TO US BY A NUMBER OF ZAMBians, INCLUDING SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. WE SUSPECT EDITORIAL LINE MAY EVEN HAVE BEEN DICTATED TO TIMES EDITORIAL STAFF BY STATE HOUSE SOURCES ALTHOUGH IN OUR EXPERIENCE TIMES REQUIRES LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT TO WRITE EDITORIALS CRITICAL OF US, ESPECIALLY ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES. FACT IS THAT MANY ZAMBians DO CONTINUE REGARD USG, DESPITE ITS AVOWED DISAPPROVAL OF SMITH REGIME, TO BE FOLLOWING AMBIVALENT POLICY ON RHODESIA WHICH MIGHT LEAD US EVENTUALLY TO COME INTO FRAY ON "WRONG SIDE" IN ATTEMPT TO COUNTER WHAT WASHINGTON MAY SEE AS SOVIET EXPANSIONIST MOVE INTO RHODESIA.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LUSAKA00599
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760090-0796
From: LUSAKA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760376/aaaacoza.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 MAY 2004 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ZAMBIAN PRESS COMMENT ON US POLICY TOWARD RHODESIA BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED
TAGS: PFOR, RH, US, MZ
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006